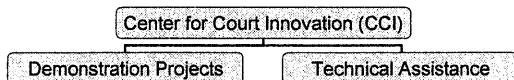


The Challenges of Juvenile Reentry

Featuring The Harlem Juvenile
Reentry Network

A project of the Center for Court Innovation

Center for Court Innovation



Mission

The Center for Court Innovation is dedicated to enhancing the performance of courts and those whose work intersects with the courts (prosecutors, probation offices and others). In performing this work, the Center's goals are to reduce crime, aid victims, strengthen neighborhoods, and promote public confidence in justice.

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JUVENILE REENTRY NETWORK

Begun in August of 2003, the Juvenile Reentry Network is an adaptation of the Adult Parole Reentry model for juveniles released to aftercare. Participants and their families are linked to an expansive network of justice system partners and social service resources. It combines detailed assessments; comprehensive supervision and service plans; rigorous monitoring; and graduated sanctions and incentives. The traditional hearing officer's role is expanded to one who monitors, prods, chastises and encourages participants toward successful community integration.

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FUNDING

- \$189,000 in funding from the state
 - Staff
 - case manager
 - hearing officer
 - sub-contracted mental health services
- Partner agencies have separate funding for their program activities*
- In-kind support from other CCI programs (mediation, clinical services, youth court, youth leadership programs, research) make it work*

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PARTNER AGENCIES

- **New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS)**
The State placement agency that also provides aftercare services for youth in their care.
- **Children's Aid Society/Girls and Boys Clubs: Community Reentry Program**
The Boys and Girls Clubs provide services and recreational activities to all kids returning from OCFS facilities who live in Manhattan. Youth are required to attend programs three nights, or at least 9 hours, a week. Services also include subcontracted mental health services and transitional educational services.
- **Phoenix House**
Provides adolescent drug treatment services.
- **CASES: School Connection**
Assists youth released from detention to re-enroll into appropriate educational settings.

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Youth Development Programming

- Takes place at Boys & Girls Clubs throughout Harlem
- Youth mandated to attend
- Interests based programming (Youth must attend, but can decide what they want to do)
- Non-stigmatizing; youth participate with other non reentry youth from the community
- Strict monitoring of compliance & attendance
- Transitional education services

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THE PROBLEM

- **Recidivism: 81% of boys and 45% of girls are rearrested within 36 months**
- Half of all youth reviewed did not have all required service plans completed while in placement.
- Of the 38 youth from the study group that entered aftercare with special needs 33 were not receiving any services.
- 26% of the required youth parental contacts were not made in aftercare – uncooperative parents are indicated as one possible reason.
- 74% of youth screened by OCFS need substance abuse services

How do you provide services in the community without compromising public safety?

Sources: Report 97-S-5 (11/29/00) NYS Comptroller's Office. See also OCFS response include in the report (10-12-00)

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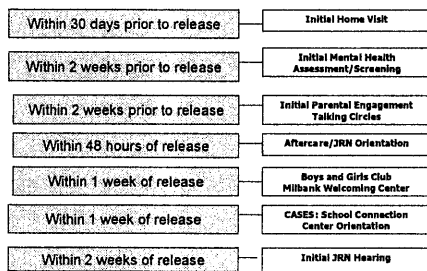
GETTING STARTED TESTING SOME IDEAS

- Court as a convener
- Greater accountability for all players: youth, family, OCFS and service providers.
- Better information = Better decision making
- Enhanced engagement of youth and parents = better youth outcomes

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THE PROCESS



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ISSUES IMPACTING COMPLIANCE

- Family conflict & stress
- School failure
- Drug involvement
- Clearly identifying youth needs
- Lack of coordination of services for youth
- Lack of resiliency & motivation

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Case Conferences

- Partners come together before each court session (CASES, Children's Aid, Boys & Girls Club, Phoenix House, OCFS)
- Detailed information about client compliance, interests and needs
- Problem-solving



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Initial Hearings

- Review the release contract & strengthening plan (Incorporates OCFS Youth Service Plan)
- Confirm curfew
- Set the tone
- Encourage the young person & parent
- Reinforce values of the program

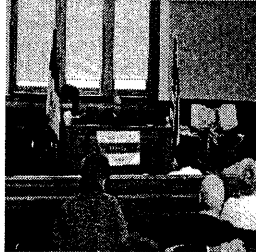


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On-going Hearings

- Twice a month
- Youth and parent input encouraged & support for the parent role
- Journals reviewed
- Problem-solving
- Sanctions and rewards
- Hearing officer can recommend revocation/removal from JRN.



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CHALLENGES

- Reenrollment in school
- Funding
- Improving the information flow from the facilities during the pre-release stage to aftercare service providers
- Institutional barriers to educational success
- Parent apathy
- Family conflict
- Going to scale

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